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1947

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E 8576

PALESTINE

2

Registry Number

E8576/8576/11

FROM

F. O. Minute

No.

Dated

8, Sept

Received in Registry

14

Refugee Problems

Minutes of meeting with Sir Archer Rooker on Sept 8, who gave a comprehensive report, starting with a number of refugee problems.

Last Paper

(Minutes.)

References

Mr. C. ...  
20/9

JB Sept. 20

(Print)

(How disposed of)

61956

(Action completed)

98/20/9

(Index)

24/9/46

Next Paper

945-6

32538

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Reference: FO 371 / 61956



E 8577

Copy to Mr. [unclear] E

Meeting with Sir Arthur Tucker, 3 F  
Room 22, 8th September, 1947.

Present:-

Mr. Gore-Smith, Mr. Hankey, Mr. Living, Mr. Moore,  
Miss Appleby, Mr. Wilkinson (A.S.), and  
Sir A. Tucker and Mr. Row (I.S.O.).

The meeting, which was informal, heard a  
comprehensive report from Sir Arthur Tucker  
dealing with a number of refugee problems.

1. Organisation. Sir Arthur said that when  
he arrived at Geneva there was considerable  
chaos owing to the headquarters being divided  
between Geneva, Paris and London and also to  
the normal difficulties attendant upon the  
fusion of two organisations like I.S.O. and  
U.S.O. However, the administrative  
machine was now tiding and although he considered  
that overhead expenses were still too high they  
were being cut down. Having created order at  
the centre, he and Mr. Tucker were starting on the  
field organisation and had already visited  
Italy and the U.S. zone of Germany.

2. Operations. It is quite clear that under  
present conditions, I.S.O. will not be able to  
liquidate the refugee problem for many years,  
and there is no likelihood of any reductions in  
next year's budget. There are about 1½ million  
refugees, of whom 7-800,000 are in assembly  
centres. Only about 60,000 are likely to be  
resettled or repatriated by the end of this  
year and this loss is likely to be offset by  
I.S.O. having to take on new arrivals from  
Eastern Europe. The high costs of care and  
maintenance left little available for resettle-  
ment and the refugee problem might well become  
self-perpetuating.

If this state of affairs were to be ended,  
two decisions would have to be made:-

- (a) A time limit should be fixed after  
which no new cases would be accepted  
by I.S.O.
- (b) Countries should be asked to take a  
quota of refugees on a non-selective  
basis, including a reasonable  
proportion of aged, infirm and Jewish  
refugees (the last named forming some  
25 per cent of the total).

There was no longer a serious shortage of  
shipping, and provided that proposal (b) were  
accepted by sufficient countries, there was  
every reason to hope that the refugee problem  
would be disposed of in 18 months. Present  
resettlement schemes were far too slow and  
provided no real solution, since not only was  
the selection process slow and laborious, but  
it was also unfair to many of the most deserving  
categories of refugees. Furthermore, existing  
resettlement schemes were not reducing the

/numbers

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expenditure on rations for displaced persons would be recoverable from I.R.C.

Mr. Ivimy promised favourable consideration for this proposal, while at the same time emphasizing the difficulties inherent in giving displaced persons rations at a higher calorie level than that received by the German population.

10. Displaced persons in the United Kingdom.

I.R.C. were anxious to enter into an agreement with H.M.G. regarding the protection of the interests of refugees coming to this country, similar to Agreements concluded with other governments. This would provide for their being joined by their families in due course and for their eventual eligibility for naturalisation.

Sir Arthur expressed the view that although H.M.G.'s record in admitting refugees to this country was an excellent one, there was still room for improvement. Not only was "Westward Ho" failing to absorb refugees rapidly enough but it was also actually hindering resettlement elsewhere, since families would not accept resettlement overseas when one of their members was in the U.K. He felt certain that displaced persons could devise temporary accommodation for themselves and their families in this country without any undue diversion of British labour and materials from the present building programme.

If a deputation of displaced persons, led by an I.R.C. official, were to be allowed to come here and inspect derelict camps, he was sure that they could make them habitable. The very worst accommodation here was preferable to the conditions under which they were living in Germany. He was sure that the U.K. authorities overrated the standard of accommodation required.

In the ensuing discussion on this point it was agreed that steps should be taken to increase the flow of displaced persons into this country particularly for agricultural work, and that families should be brought here as soon as possible. The principal obstacles were the lack of suitable accommodation, although it was felt that this might be overcome provided that the local and national authorities concerned would refrain from insisting on high standards of accommodation. It was pointed out that even in the overcrowded assembly centres often with a complete absence of amenities, there had been no epidemics, and the standard of health was higher than that of the German population. If the flow of displaced persons was increased, suitable publicity should be given so that would-be employers would not be kept in ignorance that displaced persons labour was available to replace repatriated prisoner-of-war labour.

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1947

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E 9456

PALESTINE

13 OCT

7

Registry Number

E 9456 / 8576 / 3

FROM F.O. minute.

M. Wilkinson

No.

Dated 30 Sept.

Received in Registry 13 Oct.

Jewish Refugee Problem.

Attaches list of Jewish displaced persons receiving U.N.R.R.A. assistance, & explains the extent of the problem, reasons for exodus from Europe, & the attitude of H.M.G.

Last Paper

8576

(Minutes.)

References

In P.P. F.O. minute, Memo for top /  
Brief for U.K. Del

(Print)

*J. E. Cable*  
(J. E. CABLE)  
14/10

(How disposed of)

B and D have been sent to the U.K. Delegation at N. York. D contains our case on d.p.s and it is a good one

J. E. Cable  
Oct. 15

(Action completed)

*J. E. Cable*  
25/11

(Index)

*J. E. Cable*  
14/10/47

Next Paper

I hope that when we make our case in New York for the liquidation of the refugee problem, it will get full publicity.

Information Policy Dept copied to heads of Regional Info. Dept

New Dept

38538

*J. E. Cable*  
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This material was used in the Diplomatic Programme of the C.P.B. on 7th November, 1947 (copy attached) after discussion ~~also~~ with United Nations (E.C. + Soc) Department (Mr. Wilkinson). Much of the information contained in it has also been given to the Diplomatic Correspondent of the "Times", who has also spoken to Mr. Cross-South on his return from New York. I hope it may form the basis of a special article or "leader" at the appropriate moment. The situation has been complicated by the "Times"'s commissioning of two special articles on the refugee problem by Maj. G. Fitzroy Maclean, but they may be covered by a leader based rather on this material.

It may also be possible to work in in parallel part of the illegal immigration brief, depending on your instructions.

Allowance.  
(P. 1947)  
21/11

*[Signature]*  
25/11

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have never sought to induce their Jewish nationals to return home and have in fact done their utmost to prevent them from doing so. Despite numerous appeals, the Roumanian Government, for example, has not allowed Roumanian Jews to return to Roumania from Palestine. The reasons for this attitude would appear to be:-

- (i) The departure of the Jews means a decline in anti-Semitism and removes a cause of anti-Government propaganda.
- (ii) The Governments would gain kudos in certain quarters for helping to get rid of the Jews, who, for their part will be grateful for the privilege extended to them, but denied to non-Jews, of emigrating from a Slav State.
- (iii) As most of the Jews are not engaged in productive work, their departure will mean a loss of consumers without a corresponding loss of producers.
- (iv) Once abroad, Jews, unlike other émigrés, will not be centres of intrigue and propaganda against the Slav Powers, but will on the contrary be more favourably disposed towards them for letting them go than towards the Western Powers, especially Britain, for impeding their passage to other lands or for being unwilling to have them as immigrants.
- (v) Jewish refugees will add to the already-existing refugee burden on the German, Austrian and Italian economies, thus making recovery more difficult and paving the way for Communism.
- (vi) Not merely does this exodus make the Palestine problem more acute, with the prospect of trouble in the Middle East from which the Soviet alone can benefit, but it also causes friction between the United Kingdom and other Western Powers over illegal Jewish traffic.
- (vii) It makes the infiltration of Soviet agents much easier if they can be smuggled Westward among Jewish refugees.

Responsibility for the plight of Jewish refugees must be laid at the door of the governments of their countries of origin as well as of the Zionists themselves. It might be useful to bring this out in discussions on the problems not only, as a rejoinder to Slav attacks on us, but also to demonstrate the close connexion between Zionism and Communism - a move which may have a beneficial effect on certain delegations whose friendliness to the former creed may be outweighed by their dislike of the latter. It might also be pointed out that allegations of tyranny made against the Palestine Administration sound strange when uttered by representatives of countries from which thousands of Jews have fled, preferring to go to Palestine and even to remain in Germany, rather than return to their countries of origin.

#### IV Attitude of His Majesty's Government.

We do not consider that the Jewish refugee problem should be considered separately from the general refugee problem. More than three-quarters of the refugees in Europe are not Jews and any resettlement proposals which may be made by member-governments should not discriminate in any way between refugees on religious or racial grounds. There is, of course, the probability that many Jewish refugees will not be acceptable on industrial grounds, but this does not involve any departure from principle.

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R E S T R I C T E D

Control Committee

CC(47)101  
5 August 1947

JEWISH DISPLACED PERSONS RECEIVING UNRRA ASSISTANCE  
IN GERMANY, AUSTRALIA, ITALY AND THE MIDDLE EAST  
AS OF 30 JUNE 1947

CLAIMED NATIONALITY	Number of Jewish Displaced Persons				
	TOTAL	GERMANY	AUSTRIA	ITALY	MIDDLE EAST
1	2	3	4	5	6
<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>154,996</u>	<u>134,864</u>	<u>3,337</u>	<u>16,779</u>	<u>16</u>
Austrian	538	329	0	207	2
Czechoslovak	6,888	5,904	145	839	0
German	5,792	5,651	5	136	0
Greek	226	144	9	70	3
Hungarian	8,280	6,868	189	1,223	0
Latvian	281	241	6	34	0
Lithuanian	1,821	1,616	6	199	0
Palestinian	88	55	19	14	0
Polish	121,213	107,308	2,648	11,255	2
Roumanian	7,455	4,939	288	2,228	0
Turkish	29	10	0	19	0
U.S.S.R.	1,303	1,190	0	113	0
Yugoslav	565	267	18	277	3
Undetermined	266	221	1	40	4
Other	251	121	3	125	2

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M<sup>r</sup> Beith  
Eastern Dept.

13 OCT 1947

13

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON THE  
REFUGEE PROBLEM

The extent of the problem in Germany and Austria is summarized in the attached tables. To the total of 995,000 contained therein should be added 30,000 persons in camps in Italy (more than half of whom are Jewish), approximately 150,000 outside camps in Italy and 30,000 (mostly Poles) in the Middle East and elsewhere.

2. Of this total of 1,205,000, the Volksdeutsche and Reichsdeutsche are capable of absorption into the German or Austrian economies. However, they are in demand as emigrants, especially to France, and they are thus competing with non-assimilable displaced persons. Nevertheless, any move which reduces the displaced person population in Austria is to be welcomed, and we have not opposed this action on the part of the French Government. In any case, the removal of Yugoslav Volksdeutsche from our Zone of Austria is politically important since it reduces the possibility of friction between Austria and Yugoslavia in the future.

3. Although there is still a trickle of persons returning home, repatriation is now obviously no longer likely to reduce the refugee problem to any degree. In fact, the numbers returning home are more than offset by new arrivals of Jews and Volksdeutsche from Eastern Europe.

4. Resettlement has got under way this year, but is not proceeding rapidly enough. Western Europe has been by far the most fruitful area for resettlement, although, owing to housing difficulties and the densely-populated nature of countries such as Belgium and the United Kingdom, immigration has to be highly selective and the resettlement of families is often difficult. The most successful schemes are those in operation/  
operation/

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operation in this country and Belgium. We have already absorbed 26,000 persons, while Belgium is taking 20,000 workers from the United States Zone and 15,000 from our Zone of Germany together with their families. "Westward Ho!" is getting under way once more now that employers are recognising the value of foreign labour. The greatest need is for single men and women, who can be accommodated more easily near their places of work. The Ministry of Labour have nearly exhausted the available supply of single women in Germany and Austria and are intending to send teams to Denmark and Italy to obtain recruits from among the displaced persons in this countries. As regards male workers, priority is being given to Austria (especially to the Yugoslavs in that country). It is expected that 250 persons a week will be coming here from Austria soon.\* The attached record of a visit to a holding camp in this country shows how the problem of placing EVWs in employment is being dealt with by the Ministry of Labour.

5. The Netherlands Government is also about to take a number of displaced persons and Sweden has made a preliminary offer to take 2,000 Sudeten Germans from Austria. The Scandinavian countries do not appear to be anxious to take politically-dissident displaced persons. Norway has taken 600 Jews, but no others, while Denmark is desperately anxious to see the backs of the few thousand Balts and Ukrainians who have found refuge there and who, although mostly usefully employed there, are nevertheless a source of political embarrassment.

6. This fear of offending Soviet and Communist susceptibilities is also one of the causes of the reluctance of the French Government's reluctance to take political dissidents and their preference for German nationals and persons of German ethnic origin. However, they have apparently promised I.R.O.

that/

\*Better results in recruitment from Austria are expected now that the Maclean Mission is to lend a hand in selecting suitable workers.

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take 1,000 per month and Canada has for some time past been taking small groups of refugees for employment in special occupations such as lumbering, textile work and garment-making. New Zealand, though we have recently pressed her again in the matter, has not taken any displaced persons, and South Africa, despite the presence of two immigration missions in Europe, has likewise done nothing to date.

9. The United States has provided the greatest disappointment in this respect. The Stratton Bill, which aimed at permitting the immigration of refugees at a rate of 100,000 a year for four years, has been shelved by Congress and it seems likely that some time will elapse before it is considered again. However, we have lost no opportunity of emphasising to visiting Congressmen and other interested parties that the shelving of the Bill makes nonsense of U.S. protestations about immigration into Palestine and is in sharp contrast with our own record of admitting refugees. There are indications that these representations have not been ineffective and it is possible that the Bill will not be buried, but will be given an early hearing when Congress reassembles.

10. The early passage of the Bill would be the most effective means of solving the refugee problem, especially since there is little doubt that many Jewish refugees would be glad to go to America, whereas they are not attracted by, or are often debarred from, other resettlement schemes. This would deprive the Zionists of much of their "raw material" for illegal immigration into Palestine and would make the task of I.R.O. much easier, since they could devote money at present devoted to care and maintenance towards resettlement instead.

11. As regards I.R.O., it should be understood that the Organisation is anxious to do more resettlement, but is seriously handicapped by the failure of other countries to/

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to give it financial support and by the consequent limitations on its efficiency. Unless more money is forthcoming, I.R.O. will be hard pressed to find money for anything beyond care and maintenance which, although of necessity a first charge on its resources, does nothing to liquidate the refugee problem. We are trying to devise ways and means of reducing expenditure on care and maintenance in order to divert funds towards resettlement instead.

12. Our policy is, of course, to aim at the early liquidation of the refugee problem, which is the source of so many other political and economic difficulties which are embarrassing to us. In order to bring this about, we are concentrating on the following points:-

- (i) Getting more countries to join I.R.O. and give it financial support.
- (ii) Urging the strictest economy by I.R.O., especially in its administrative and care and maintenance budgets.
- (iii) Pressing more European countries, and France in particular, to take refugee workers.
- (iv) Getting the United States Government and Congress to pass the Stratton Bill as soon as possible.
- (v) Encouraging other countries, especially those within the Commonwealth, to admit more refugees.
- (vi) Inspiring voluntary organisations to do more towards financing resettlement schemes.
- (vii) Interesting Governments, banks and other bodies in the value of group resettlement as a means of opening up undeveloped areas.

(A. W. H. Wilkinson)  
8th October, 1947.

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BRITISH ZONE, GERMANY, AS AT 15TH SEPTEMBER, 1947.

Balts	64,736
Poles	98,881 (incl. 10,373 C.M.W.S and C.M.L.O.)
Polish-Ukrainians	30,010
Russians	238
Yugoslavs	23,624 (incl. 6,204 C.M.W.S. and C.M.L.O.)
Undetermined and others	12,911
<b>TOTAL IN ZONE</b>	<b>230,397</b>

UNITED STATES AND FRENCH ZONES, GERMANY, AS AT JUNE, 1947

	<u>U.S. Zone</u>	<u>French Zone</u>
Balts	80,758	6,149
Poles	53,880	18,643
Polish-Ukrainians	69,774	-
Byelo-Russians	2,718	-
Soviets	3,470	274
Yugoslavs	5,372	1,944
Undetermined and others	17,201	11,725
Jews	153,246	101

RUSSIAN ZONE - NO FIGURES AVAILABLE

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BRITISH ZONE, AUSTRIA, AS AT 25TH AUGUST, 1947.

(A)	<u>Non-German D.Ps.</u>	<u>In Camps</u>	<u>Outside Camps</u>
	Hungarians	1,891	5,363
	Yugoslavs	5,801	16,453
	Poles	1,855	4,678
	Belts	308	517
	Polish-Ukrainians	1,483	1,113
	Stateless, unclassified and others	4,592	12,050

TOTAL IN ZONE 15,930 in camps  
40,164 outside camps.

(B)	<u>Repatriable Volksdeutsche</u>	<u>In Camps</u>	<u>Outside Camps</u>
	Sudeten Germans and Czechs	211	25,876
	Hungarians	903	3,094
	Poles	67	1,672
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,181</b>	<b>30,642</b>

(C)	<u>Non-repatriable Volksdeutsche</u>	<u>In Camps</u>	<u>Outside Camps</u>
	Yugoslavs	11,869	-
	Rumanians	489	-
	Belts and others	29	105
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,387</b>	<b>105</b>

(D)	<u>Reichsdeutsche</u>	<u>In Camps</u>	<u>Outside Camps</u>
		1,304	12,751

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UNITED STATES ZONE, AUSTRIA, AS AT JULY, 1947

	<u>In Camps</u>	<u>Outside Camps.</u>
Hungarians	97	5,241
Poles	869	2,575
Balts	1,238	972
Yugoslavs	1,487	3,682
Ukrainians	3,438	4,989
Others	11,360	118,291
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18,489</b>	<b>139,750</b>

<u>Reichsdeutsche</u>	<u>In Camps</u>	<u>Outside Camps</u>
	306	3,853

<u>Volksdeutsche</u>	<u>In Camps</u>	<u>Outside Camps</u>
Czechs	398	6,044
Hungarians	675	1,035
Balts	117	23
Poles	603	3,855
Roumanians	6,068	32,433
Yugoslavs	12,519	58,343
Others	312	642
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20,478</b>	<b>82,375</b>

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FRENCH ZONE, AUSTRIA, AS AT JULY, 1947.

	<u>In Camps</u>	<u>Outside Camps</u>
Balts	169	1,016
Poles	619	2,603
Hungarians	629	1,937
Polish-Ukrainians	2,628	2,108
Yugoslavs	247	862
Others	2,048	2,455
	-----	-----
TOTAL	6,340	10,981
	-----	-----

	<u>In Camps</u>	<u>Outside Camps</u>
<u>Volksdeutsche</u>		
Yugoslavs	2,492	2,741
Rumanians	422	1,448
Poles	32	791
Sudeten Germans	195	11,206
Hungarians	85	819
	-----	-----
TOTAL	3,226	17,005
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	<u>In Camps</u>	<u>Outside Camps</u>
<u>Reichsdeutsche</u>		
	41	14,040

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that the refugee problem is "international in scope and nature," it is incumbent upon members to play their part in bringing about an early solution to the problem.

- (d) To this end, members are urged to state what contribution they are prepared to make, by financial support for I.R.O. and/or by admitting refugees to their territories.

Foreign Office,

End October, 1947.

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Central Office of Information

OVERSEAS PRESS SERVICES

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SERVICE	DATE	TRANSMISSION
LONDON PRESS	SEVENTH NOVEMBER	FIVE

DIPLOMATIC PROGRAMME para

ITEM ONE stop Economic Social Committee of United Nations Assembly bracket Committee number Three bracket has this week been discussing urgent and vital problem of resettlement of the one million two hundred thousand refugees and displaced persons still lying homeless inside or outside camps in Europe para

These refugees of course include Jewish refugees in Europe but Jews represent less than one quarter of total number stop Problem is therefore essentially general and not preeminently Jewish problem para

Imperative need to find homes for Jewish refugees in Europe is widely recognised and United Nations Special Committee on Palestine in its recommendation number six urged General Assembly to quote undertake immediately initiation and execution of international arrangement for dealing with problem of distressed European Jews comma of whom approximately quarter million are in assembly centres comma as matter of extreme urgency for alleviation of their plight and of Palestine problem unquote para

HM Govt are acutely aware of urgency of refugee problem both in its general and its special Jewish aspects para

They accordingly submitted yesterday to Committee number Three resolution recommending that each member of United Nations should adopt urgent measures for settling fair share of displaced persons and refugees in its country and that it should join with other nations through International Refugee Organisation or its Preparatory Commission in development of overall plans to accomplish this end para

Resolution was introduced by UK Delegate Mr Davies who said this seemed appropriate time to call upon all countries to face seriousness of this problem and realise great benefits to be gained by positive attempts to solve it stop This was great opportunity for all to contribute towards quote turning mouths into hands unquote and he hoped British resolution would help to bring problem home to conscience of world para

In course of speech before Committee Mr Davies observed United Nations Special Committee on Palestine had rightly called attention to problem of Jewish refugees in Europe stop Like all other Govts HM Govt were anxious do utmost to solve this Jewish

P.T.O.

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aspect of problem stop But HM Govt comma he emphasised comma were equally concerned to end once for all sufferings of remaining seventyfive percent or more of non Jewish refugees and displaced persons and turn them into useful members of society with settled occupations para

Mr Davies mentioned as some of most urgent practical needs semicolon more rapid procedure by missions selecting displaced persons for immigration comma more funds for resettlement comma more ships for transport but above all greater readiness by individual countries to admit displaced persons para

HM Govt felt the less embarrassed in making this plea to other countries in view of record of what Britain herself had done in matter stop From end war to spring of this year three hundred thousand individuals who would otherwise have been in displaced persons camps on European continent had been admitted into UK of whom two hundred thousand had found homes here and remainder had been settled elsewhere stop In last few months another twentyfive thousand had arrived and still more were arriving under British quote Westward Ho unquote scheme for absorbing refugees and displaced persons into employment in UK para

Mr Davies reminded Committee that there existed machinery ready to hand for dealing with this problem namely Preparatory Commission of International Refugee Organisation and question was what could this Assembly do to make this machinery effective and give one million people a home para

In substance comma LPS Diplomatic Correspondent observes comma British view is that refugee problem is general problem stop Problem of Jewish refugees is part of it but should not be considered separately from it stop Problem calls for immediate action which should take form of effective resettlement comma which is economic as quote turning mouths into hands unquote comma rather than of care and maintenance which perpetuates instead of liquidating problem stop Urgent need is to secure more support for International Refugee Organisation and for more countries to take in refugees para

Lastly LPS Diplomatic Correspondent stresses that if prospect is fulfilled and that as many as three hundred thousand refugees/displaced persons shall have eventually found home in UK comma this country with its dense population will have given hospitality with chance of starting new life to nearly one quarter of all refugees displaced persons left in Europe as aftermath of Nazi aggression dash  
p.t.o.

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